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### OPERA PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR.

MANY CHANGES CONTEMPLATED BY MR. CONRIED.

European Idea of Extra Performances to Be Introduced at the Metropolitan—Troubles With Tenors and Conductors—How a German Ran Up His Prices.

Since Heinrich Conried returned to New York, he has all but completed the arrangements for the next opera season at the Metropolitan. A few artists still remain to be engaged and there are some details of the repertoire to be adjusted. Otherwise, in the main, he has in the past ten days settled what the season is to be.

The most interesting among the new singers is to be Bertha Morana of Munich, who is regarded as the most beautiful woman on the operatic stage in Germany. She has spent nearly all her career at the Royal Opera House in the Bavarian capital and has there acquired her fame. She is tall and stately in appearance and of great brunet beauty. Her roles are the lighter Wagnerian lyric parts, although she has occasionally sung with less success and against the advice of Ernst Possart the *Brünnhilde*.

Mlle. Morana is scarcely known outside of Germany, but her reputation as a beauty extends throughout that country. At the Metropolitan she is to take the place of Mme. Senger-Bettaque, who came here last season.

Whether or not Herr Knote will return here is one of the unsettled questions. He left here quite willing to come back on the terms suggested to him by Mr. Conried, but as soon as he got to Munich his wife's relatives denied that he expected ever to sing here again. The reason for this is Mr. Conried's refusal to pay the fee of \$1,800 which Herr Knote demanded when he reached home.

He is said to have named this figure on the ground that Signor Caruso receives this amount. As a matter of fact Caruso gets very much less, although, as a drawing card, he is much more potent than the German singer.

Herr Knote came here for 2,500 marks a performance. Mr. Conried was willing to pay him one thousand marks for next year and another thousand marks for the following season, making his fee 4,000 marks, or \$1,200, which must certainly be nearly six times as much as he receives in Munich.

At last accounts he was standing out for \$1,500, having diminished his call by \$300. Nobody doubts that he and Mr. Conried will ultimately come to terms, as Herr Knote made a great success here and the public will want to hear the only tenor who has satisfied it in the German rôle since the retirement of Jean de Reszke.

Mr. Conried need not worry over the Italian tenor question, since it is settled for him for the next four years as Signor Caruso is to return.

With his French tenor he has had difficulties. He would have engaged M. Saléza without thought had not certain stockholders of the Conried Metropolitan Opera Company who are strongly Francophile believed that an artist from the Grand Opéra in Paris should be engaged.

As it was not possible to bring back the conventional and semaphoric Brava again, the stockholders referred to insisted on Albert Alvarez, who certainly did not make much impression on his previous visits here. M. Alvarez demanded fifty appearances at \$1,500, the same terms that

caused Maurice Grau a loss of almost \$75,000 in two seasons.

Mr. Conried refused this demand, naturally, and offered the sum demanded for thirty representations. Alvarez declined to accept this contract.

Since that time, however, he may have changed his mind. He has just left the Paris Opéra in a rage. His appearances in "Tristan and Isolde" were not a success and the opera failed to draw.

M. Gaillard therefore engaged Ernest Van Dyck to sing the rôle of the hero. This was too much for Alvarez, and he immediately threw up his contract. He may be ready, therefore, to accept more reasonable terms, although it is more probable that Mr. Conried will again engage M. Saléza, who sings in German as well as in French and Italian.

Mr. Conried wants a Wagner conductor. The presence of Felix Weingartner in this city next year might make it possible for him to appear occasionally, but his stay here will be too short to admit of his conducting more than a few performances, even if he does that.

Ernst von Schuch of Dresden will not come here because Mr. Conried will not give him an annuity equal to that he will receive when he is ready to retire from active work in Dresden. Dr. Mink of Berlin and Hans Richter of Manchester are other men he thought of, but Richter is now too old to make much of a success here, and Mink is tied up with the direction of the Royal Opera House in Berlin for some time to come.

Nor is there any truth in the rumor that Gustav Mahler is going to leave Vienna, which might make him a splendid man for the Metropolitan if everything about it could be completely changed. So long as the present Court Chamberlain remains in power in Vienna Herr Mahler will retain his post there.

It is settled, however, that there will be for at least a part of the time a new Wagner conductor here next winter.

It is probable that the Nibelungen operas, "Parsifal" certainly, and some of the other works which are always very popular will be given on Thursdays outside the repertoire subscription. The subscription on the regular nights is now so large that there can never be any doubt of the profit at these performances.

The French and Italian operas as well as the lighter works of Wagner will be given on these nights, while the Nibelungen and some other operas will be given on outside nights, as their popularity is so great that they are certain to draw large audiences in any case. This is in a measure like the European manner of giving the operas, with the difference that it is the singers and not the operas that are put outside the subscription.

When a star goes to Berlin or Vienna, for instance, he or she does not sing in the regular performances, but outside the subscription. Mr. Conried is going to follow this plan with his operas but not with his singers. So the Nibelungen Ring, which was not once given in the subscription last season, will again be reserved for the special performances.

The orchestra pit at the opera house is to be so arranged next season that it may be raised or lowered, according to what the opera may be. For the Wagner works there will be a lower orchestra, while for the Italian operas, in which the orchestration is so much lighter, the platform will be raised.

Other alterations to the theatre will be an enlargement of the Broadway entrance in order that more room may be made in the box offices. The entrance now used by the tenants of the Broadway apartment house will be made a part of the opera house lobby.

Mr. Conried hopes to give among the new works and revivals Goldmark's "The Queen of Sheba," Bellini's "La Sonnambula," Flotow's "Martha" and probably Offenbach's "Les Contes d'Hoffmann."

He hopes that Mme. Terzani will be able to join the company again next year, for a part of the time at least. She is in very good voice according to the latest accounts from Munich and will take part in the Wagner festival to be given at the Prinz Regent Theatre at Munich during the late summer.

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It does matter what man or mill weaves the Carpets. That you buy of a firm that stands for as much as the man and the mill does matter. But that either or both should mean high prices, that we deny and here are the proofs:

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We have planned the most elaborate showing of model Tailored Wear ever offered to the women of Brooklyn and at most remarkable savings.

The New York Tribune selected some of our garments to print in their Fashion Show of last Sunday, as did Brooklyn Life. We have had during the week ample testimony to the fact that our garments vied with the handsomest shown by other first class houses and at about HALF THE COST.

### ROMANCES OF BANK NOTES.

Peculiar Payments Made by the Bank of England.

On one occasion the Bank of England had presented to it for payment a hard ball of paper.

It was a £5 note which had been given by a prominent artist to his sister for payment of a bill.

The young woman had placed it in the pocket of her dress and promptly forgot it till the same dress made its return from the laundry.

Washing, starching and ironing had not improved the bank note's appearance, but when the ball of paper was carefully unrolled there was sufficient to see that it had been a bank note, and the bank paid the money without hesitation, says *Pearson's Weekly*.

More than once the Bank of England has paid twice for one bank note. On one occasion they lost in this way £30,000.

It happened that one of the directors, desirous of purchasing an estate, drew from the bank a single note for the amount mentioned. This, on returning home, he placed on the mantelpiece, when, immediately on doing so, he was called from the room.

A few moments later he came into the room again, but alas! the note had mysteriously disappeared. To the director's mind there seemed little doubt that the valuable piece of paper had fallen into the fire. Robbery was out of the question, for no one had entered the room.

His colleagues at the bank, believing this story, gave him a second note on the understanding that the first, if found, should be returned.

Thirty years afterward, when the Director had been dead a considerable time, a stranger presented the missing note.

Being payable to bearer, the bank could not avoid their obligation, and they had to be the losers of the sum. It was learned afterward that a builder had bought the banker's house, and in the course of the demolition had discovered the note hidden in a crevice of the chimney.

How a bank note once saved a man's life is a most romantic story.

In the ordinary course of business many years ago a Bank of England note—now in possession of a famous collector—was paid into a Liverpool merchant's office.

On coming into the hands of the cashier he found, while examining it to discover its genuineness, that there were faint traces of red writing upon it. The note had been in circulation for years, and it was only by the dint of extraordinary pains that the partly obliterated characters were finally deciphered.

This was the message it bore: "If this note should fall into the hands of John Dean of Longhill, near Carlisle, he will learn thereby that his brother is languishing as a prisoner in Algiers."

Mr. Dean was communicated with, and he appealed to the Government to endeavor to obtain his brother's release from captivity.

Interested themselves warmly in the matter, the Prime Minister and the Joint Foreign Secretaries, learned that the unhappy prisoner, who had traced the above sentence with a splinter dipped in his own blood, had been a slave to the Dey of Algiers for about eleven years.

Eventually, the Government succeeded in ransoming Mr. Dean from the Dey, but the poor fellow had endured so much privation and hardship while working in the galleys that he lived but a short while after his freedom.

An elderly couple living in Paris have recently met with a sad misfortune. In-

side a dilapidated old hatbox, which the most experienced burglar might have ignored, they had placed their entire fortune—a sheaf of banknotes, amounting to over £5,000.

Periodically either the husband or wife opened the box and counted the notes to see that their wealth was still intact.

Imagine their surprise when, on going to it the other day, not a single note was to be found—only a little heap of dust.

Rats had entered the box and devoured every scrap of the precious paper.

More fortunate was an old Belgian peasant woman, although at first she was thrown into just as hopeless despair. She had laid on the grass a jacket containing bank notes worth £48 altogether, and then set about her work in the fields, accompanied by a pet goat.

To her horror she suddenly caught sight of the goat munching something that looked like her precious fortune.

Examination proved her surmise to be true. The goat had been browsing on her bank notes.

That same evening the pet was killed and the chewed paper removed from its stomach. It looked a sorry mess, but the old woman lost no time in submitting it to the National Bank at Belgium, which, after verifying the facts and proving by chemical analysis that the paper had been notes issued by them, paid the woman the £48.

### TOSSED CATS OVER THE "L."

Amusement of Five Young Men in Sixth Avenue Last Sunday Morning.

A new form of athletic sport which would not meet with the approval of Henry Bergh's followers was observed between 7 and 8 o'clock last Sunday morning at Sixth avenue and Thirty-sixth street.

Five young men vied with one another in efforts to throw cats over the elevated

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